

# NEWS

## DEPARTMENT OF LABOR BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS



**SOUTHEASTERN REGIONAL OFFICE**  
**61 FORSYTH STREET, SW, ROOM 7T50**  
**ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30303**  
**TELEPHONE: 404-331-3415**  
**FAX-ON-DEMAND 404-331-3403**  
**Request Document No. 9115**

**RELEASE OF THIS MATERIAL IS  
EMBARGOED UNTIL 8:30 A.M., EST,  
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2001**

Media Contact: Michael Wald  
(404) 331-3446  
Internet address: <http://www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm>

### CONSUMER PRICE INDEX FOR ATLANTA—OCTOBER 2001

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for Atlanta declined 0.1 percent over the two months ended in October, not seasonally adjusted, to a level of 176.7 (1982-84=100), the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. Regional Commissioner Janet S. Rankin announced that for the 12-month period ended in October, the CPI-U for Atlanta increased 2.8 percent.

Over the two months, the all items index reflected lower costs for housing, offsetting increases in the food and beverages, apparel, and transportation indexes. After rising 3.4 percent over the first six months of the year, the all items index has declined 0.6 percent since June. Since December 2000, the index has increased 2.8 percent compared to a 2.9 percent increase for the comparable period in calendar year 2000.

Among the special indexes compiled, energy costs declined 6.6 percent over the past two months due to a seasonal decrease in electricity costs. The food index recorded a 1.5 percent rise reflecting a slightly larger than usual seasonal increase in the index. Excluding food and energy, the CPI-U for Atlanta has increased 0.3 percent since August 2001.

Table A. Percent changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers for Atlanta by expenditure category (not seasonally adjusted).

Expenditure category	Percentage change	
	Over 12 months since October 2000	Over 2 months since August 2001
All items	2.8	-0.1
Food and beverages	6.0	1.4
Housing	3.0	-2.1
Apparel	-3.0	7.9
Transportation	-0.1	1.2
Medical care	4.6	0.8
Recreation 1/	4.1	0.0
Education and communication 1/	3.1	0.0
Other goods and services	5.1	0.2

1/ Index on a December 1997=100 base.

Among the major index groups, the food and beverages index rose 1.4 percent after dropping in the May-June and July-August pricing periods. The index reflected a 1.8 percent rise in the cost of food at home and a 1.2 percent increase for food away from home. Costs for alcoholic beverages were unchanged over the two months. Over the past 12 months, the food and beverages index has risen 6.0 percent as food at home costs rose 7.5 percent. The 6.0 percent increase for Atlanta compares to a 3.2 percent rise in food and beverage costs for the South region for the same period.

Housing costs accelerated their decline, dropping 2.1 percent, as costs for both shelter and household fuels and utilities decreased over the two months. Shelter costs declined 0.9 percent despite increases in the cost of rent of primary residence and owners' equivalent rent of primary residence. The decrease in the fuels and utilities index reflected a 19.6 percent drop in electricity costs. The lower electricity costs reflected seasonal factors with the index declining by a similar percentage each year after the summer months. Overall, housing costs in the Atlanta area have risen 3.0 percent since October 2000.

The apparel index reversed its previous decline and increased 7.9 percent in the two months ending in October. The larger than usual seasonal increase partially offset large declines in the index recorded in the May-June and July-August pricing periods. Despite the most recent increase, apparel costs in Atlanta have dropped 3.0 percent since October 2000.

Transportation costs increased 1.2 percent over the two months. Over the two months, gasoline prices rose 1.5 percent reflecting 9.0 percent increase for the month of September and a 6.9 percent decline during the month of October. Other costs in the transportation index include motor vehicle parts and equipment and motor vehicle maintenance and repair. Since October 2000, the transportation index has declined 0.1 percent.

Other indexes reported include the medical care index that rose 0.8 percent after declining 0.4 percent in July-August pricing period. With the most recent increase, consumers' costs for medical care in the Atlanta area now stand 4.6 percent higher than they were in October 2000. Both the recreation index and the education and communication index were unchanged over the two months. Over the past 12 months, recreation costs have risen 4.1 percent, while costs for education and communication have increased 3.1 percent. Costs for other goods and services rose 0.2 percent over two months, bringing the index to a level 5.1 percent higher than it was in October 2000.

### **Consumer Price Index for the South and Miami-Fort Lauderdale**

Consumer price indexes are published monthly for the South and bi-monthly for the Atlanta and Miami-Fort Lauderdale areas. For the two months ending in October, consumer prices in the Atlanta area decreased slightly, while prices rose in the South and Miami-Fort Lauderdale. Since August 2001, CPI-U for the South has risen 0.1 percent and increased 0.4 percent for the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area. With the most recent changes, over the past year, consumer prices in Atlanta rose faster than in the South (1.9 percent) and at about the same pace as in the Miami-Fort Lauderdale area (2.7 percent).

### **Technical Notes**

For the Atlanta area, collection has been expanded to allow for bi-monthly publication of data. Prior to 1998, Atlanta data were available for only the first and second halves of the year and as an annual average. In each revision, the CPI geographic sample is selected to be representative of the current demographics of the United States. The 1998 revision utilizes the 1990 Census of population. The CPI developed an updated area sample design, decided on new local area indexes and changed the frequency of publication for local area indexes in order to better reflect these new demographics.

Local area CPI indexes are by-products of the national CPI program. Because each local index is a small subset of the national index, it has a smaller sample size and is, therefore, subject to substantially more sampling and measurement error than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. The Bureau of Labor Statistics strongly urges users to consider adopting the national average CPI for use in escalator clauses.

We encourage users interested in learning more about changes to the CPI to contact the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Information on the Consumer Price Index and other surveys are available on our web site at <http://www.bls.gov>. Current and historical BLS data are also posted on our Internet page at <http://www.bls.gov/ro4/home.htm>. CPI data are also available through our fax-on-demand system. Table 1 for the CPI-U, South may be found under Code 9110. Data in this table are updated monthly and are available on the day of release. For a catalog of items available to be faxed to you, call our fax-on-demand number at (404) 331-3403. If you have additional questions, you can contact the Atlanta information office directly by dialing (404) 331-3415, and customers in the Miami area can reach us at (305) 358-2305.

### **Revisions to the Consumer Price Indexes**

Users should be aware that CPI data were revised to correct an error in the residential rent and owners' equivalent rent components. Indexes were revised for both the CPI-U and CPI-W for the period January 2000 through August 2000. For more information, contact the Atlanta information office.

### **Change in the Consumer Price Index Formula**

On April 16, 1998, the Bureau of Labor Statistics announced its decision to use a new formula for calculating the basic components of the Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) and the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). This change became effective with data for January 1999.

The new formula, the geometric mean estimator, is used in index categories that comprise approximately 61 percent of total consumer spending represented by the CPI-U. The remaining index categories will continue to be calculated as they have been. Based upon BLS research, it is expected that new formula will reduce the annual rate of increase in the CPI by approximately 0.2 percentage point per year.

The geometric mean estimator was introduced in both the CPI-U and the CPI-W effective with data for January 1999, in accord with the past practice of introducing methodological changes at the beginning of a calendar year. BLS will continue to publish "overlap" CPI-U and CPI-W series using the current calculation method for the first six months of 1999. These indexes will not be published regularly for months subsequent to June 1999, but will be available upon request. Additional information on this change was published in the April 1998 CPI Detailed Report and is available on the Internet.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers and urban wage earners and clerical workers, Atlanta, Georgia, (1982-84=100), Not seasonally adjusted

Group	All urban consumers			Urban wage earners and clerical workers		
	Index Oct 2001	Percent change to Oct 2001 from		Index Oct 2001	Percent change to Oct 2001 from	
		Oct 2000	Aug 2001		Oct 2000	Aug 2001
All items	176.7	2.8	-0.1	174.1	2.7	-0.1
All items (1967=100)	532.9	-	-	526.5	-	-
Food and beverages	182.6	6.0	1.4	181.7	6.3	1.3
Food	188.2	6.3	1.5	186.4	6.5	1.4
Food at home	183.9	7.5	1.8	180.0	7.7	1.6
Food away from home	196.1	5.0	1.2	197.8	5.0	1.2
Alcoholic beverages	133.9	2.1	0.0	131.8	2.7	-0.1
Housing	177.3	3.0	-2.1	174.7	3.4	-2.1
Shelter	197.8	3.4	-0.9	193.1	3.9	-0.3
Rent of primary residence	204.4	5.9	0.9	204.4	5.9	0.9
Owners' equivalent rent 1/	194.3	4.0	1.0	180.9	4.0	1.1
Fuel and utilities	164.0	3.3	-9.6	162.9	3.2	-10.3
Fuels	152.0	3.1	-11.7	150.7	3.0	-12.4
Gas (piped) and electricity	153.4	3.3	-11.9	151.4	3.3	-12.6
Electricity	136.0	2.8	-19.6	136.0	2.8	-19.6
Utility natural gas service	189.0	4.0	0.7	189.0	4.0	0.7
Household furnishings and operation	128.1	-0.5	-1.2	131.2	0.1	-1.3
Apparel	128.5	-3.0	7.9	125.2	-3.1	8.6
Transportation	139.2	-0.1	1.2	136.9	-1.2	1.0
Private transportation	138.9	-0.5	1.2	135.6	-1.5	1.0
Motor fuel	111.1	-11.6	1.5	111.1	-11.6	1.5
Gasoline (all types)	110.4	-11.7	1.5	110.4	-11.7	1.5
Regular unleaded 2/	107.1	-12.6	1.2	107.1	-12.6	1.2
Midgrade unleaded /2 /3	134.1	-11.3	1.4	134.1	-11.3	1.4
Premium unleaded 2/	117.0	-10.1	1.7	117.0	-10.1	1.7
Medical care	279.2	4.6	0.8	271.2	3.3	0.2
Recreation 4/	107.6	4.1	0.0	102.1	2.6	0.0
Education and communication 4/	108.8	3.1	0.0	108.3	3.1	0.0
Other goods and services	267.9	5.1	0.2	290.6	5.9	0.4
SPECIAL AGGREGATE INDEXES						
Commodities	146.4	1.2	1.6	147.0	1.1	1.4
Commodities less food and beverages	127.7	-1.5	1.7	128.7	-1.9	1.4
Nondurables less food and beverages	137.8	-1.7	2.8	143.5	-2.0	2.7
Durables	115.8	-1.4	0.3	116.5	-1.7	0.2
Services	207.1	3.9	-1.2	205.4	3.9	-1.3
All items less medical care	170.6	2.6	-0.2	168.8	2.7	-0.1
All items less shelter	170.2	2.5	0.2	168.9	2.2	0.1
Commodities less food	127.8	-1.4	1.7	128.9	-1.8	1.4
Nondurables	159.4	2.2	2.1	162.4	2.3	2.0
Nondurables less food	137.0	-1.5	2.7	142.5	-1.7	2.5
Energy	122.2	-3.6	-6.6	122.4	-4.4	-6.4
All items less energy	184.0	3.3	0.4	181.5	3.4	-0.6
All items less food and energy	183.9	2.9	0.3	180.9	2.7	-0.4
Purchasing power of the consumer dollar:						
1982-84=\$1.00	\$566	-	-	\$574	-	-
1967=\$1.00	\$188	-	-	\$190	-	-

1/ Index is on a December 1982=100 base.

3/ Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

2/ Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

4/ Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

- Data not available.

Users should be aware that CPI data were revised to correct an error in the residential rent and owner's equivalent rent components. Indexes were revised for both the CPI-U and CPI-W for the period January 2000 through August 2000. For more information, call (404) 331-3415.